

II. Holy Week in Biblical Perspective  
*Eight Days of Grace to Glory*  
“The Three Suppers from the Lord”  
Luke 22:7–20  
Dr. Harry L. Reeder III  
April 1, 2021 • Maundy Thursday Sermon

This is our Maundy Thursday sermon. Maundy comes from the Latin word that we get the word mandate from and there is a two-fold command from it. We are to celebrate this meal in the New Covenant and the other command He gave to them was we are to love one another as I have loved you. The command to love one another has been throughout the Bible but now we have before us with His 33 years of ministry and His 3 year public ministry how we ought to love Him and how we ought to love one another because of the love of Christ which sets us free from our sin. Jesus has given us a meal. This isn't new but when we come to this meal we celebrate this meal ten times throughout the year here at Briarwood and our focus is to create a season of communion coming to the Lord's Supper. The Table brings us back to where our foundation is for salvation. That foundation is in Christ and in Christ alone.

This supper that He instituted is not the first one. I want to start by looking at Luke's account of this Maundy Thursday evening. Luke 22:1–13 says *[1] Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. [2] And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put Him to death, for they feared the people.* (Even in their hatred against the Messiah they are still apart of God's plan.)

*[3] Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. [4] He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them. [5] And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. [6] So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of a crowd.*

*[7] Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. [8] So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.”* (Interesting to note that Peter and John are chosen to prepare this meal that points to Jesus' death and it is Peter and John who go to the empty tomb after His resurrection.)

*[9] They said to Him, “Where will you have us prepare it?” [10] He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters [11] and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room (Upper Room), where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’ [12] And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.” [13] And they went and found it just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover.*

*Katalyma* is the Greek word for guest room here. In these times a guest room would be on the second floor and it was an open air room. This room here will become the epicenter of Christianity. He was born in a stable but they came looking for an upper room in Bethlehem and after His birth they moved to an upper room. Now Jesus gets to the end of His life and we're in another *katalyma*. It is here Jesus will celebrate the last Passover, the first Lord's Supper and it is here Jesus will come for the first gathered worship service on the first Lord's Day. As Jesus goes to the cross it is here that many of His disciples will take refuge here as they run in fear and it is here on the resurrection that Jesus will come and be in their midst. Thomas, His Disciple won't be there on the first gathering but Jesus will come back one week later, the second Lord's Day worship service and Thomas will be there. This Upper Room is big enough to handle 120

people because when Jesus ascends 40 days later He will send them back to this room to wait for His Spirit. This is where Pentecost occurs. It is in this same room they will be praying when Peter is set free after being arrested. It is a very special place for it is a place that becomes very precious in the lives of the people of God. In this Luke 22 text we're introduced to this room.

The master of this house is likely the brother of a man named Barnabas and I believe I can prove this from the Scripture. He has a son named John Mark who will be part of the first missionary team, who will also follow Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane after this supper. He is the one who will escape by running out of his robe there. It's really interesting all the dynamics that are happening in these eight days from grace to glory – the week that changes everything. Let's continue in the text.

Luke 22:14–23 says *[14] And when the hour came, He reclined at table, and the apostles with Him. [15] And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. [16] For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." [17] And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. [18] For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." [19] And He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." [20] And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. [21] But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. [22] For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" [23] And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.*

We know Jesus is talking of Judas Iscariot who will betray Him. John records more on the conversation between Jesus and Judas here at this Table. I have often wondered why He picked Peter and John to go and prepare this when Judas was the treasurer. Should he not pick up the check and make the preparation? Yet what was Judas thinking about? He was thinking about how he was going to betray Jesus privately and at this supper would have been a good opportunity if he had known where they were going, but he doesn't know. Judas will leave this supper and go to those he had agreed with to betray Him to get his 30 pieces of silver and after Jesus preaches His Upper Room discourse, they will go back to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus will hold a prayer meeting with Peter, James and John. Then Judas will come there to hand Him over for that will be the time.

After Judas leaves it's interesting to note that when Jesus said someone would betray Him that they began questioning one another. There is only one of the Disciples sitting there who asks Jesus who it is and that's Judas. When Judas asks this Jesus responds, 'what you do, do quickly' (John 13:27). Now is the time for we see the sovereign hand of Christ establishing the meal where we can focus on Him. Every time we do it, we recalibrate. Our hope is what Christ did on the cross where the love of God met the holiness of God to save sinners by the grace of God to the glory of God.

When Jesus does this there is a real convergence that is taking place. This is called the last supper by many and it is in the sense that this is the last time Jesus will physically sit with them at this supper. They will celebrate this supper regularly but in Jesus' Incarnate existence this will be the last time they do this together. It's also another last supper in that it is the last Passover supper and it's the first New Covenant Lord's Supper. So there is the Passover supper that is anticipating Christ, the Lamb that is slain, who cleans out the leaven and takes away our sin. Now because of what Christ does and accomplishes we now have the fulfillment and this

bloody Old Covenant supper which is fulfilled in Christ is now a bloodless supper and points back to what He is going to do as He bears our sins in His body and sheds His blood declaring our forgiveness of sins as He clothes us with His righteousness so that we have everlasting life in Him.

Then He tells them He will one day eat it again with them when He eats it anew and there He is looking to the consummation supper – the marriage supper – when all of His people will be together with Him in the new heavens and new earth and new Jerusalem that has come down. They all knew about the Passover. Luke and John both point out that Jesus' family observed the suppers of the feasts regularly as He was growing up and begins His public ministry at age 30. John tells us in the three years of His public ministry that Jesus intentionally celebrates the supper every single year. John 2 records the first Lord's Supper in His public ministry. John 6 records the second Lord's Supper in His public ministry and John 12, our text for this study, is the last time He will celebrate the Lord's Supper in His public ministry.

In His public ministry there is the triumphal entry. The next day He cleanses the temple which was the second time He had done this in His public ministry. The day after that He is teaching in the temple with all of these parables and lessons. Here is what Jesus says to them as He finishes that day of teaching in Matthew 26:1–2; [1] *When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, [2] "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."* Then look at what happens in the next three verses. Matthew 26:3–5 says [3] *Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, [4] and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. [5] But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people."*

Wednesday of that week comes in which there is reflection and then comes the day of the preparations of the Passover, this day. So how would the Passover been prepared? The Seders that people experience today are ones from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that Jews would practice in European areas. We have done our research and have found that this is not a complicated banquet, but remember our very first Passover. It was basically a meal to go. It was intentional and simple. One was to eat it clothed with your staff and to eat it all. Then take your staff and follow Me. Be ready to go for Me.

There would be ten steps they would take as they would do this meal but I'm not going to go over all of them. Step one would have been the preparation of it. There would be the use of herbs but leaven is not used so the bread used would have no leaven. Then there would have been a lamb that was slain. Jesus in the fulfillment of the slaying of the Passover lamb will do away with slain lamb as He goes to the cross and He will do away with Yom Kippur which was on the Day of Atonement also because of what He does on the cross for us. Whatever was served at this meal had to be completely eaten. The only ones allowed at the table were God's covenant people – those who bore the sign of the covenant, circumcision, and their families.

The next thing that would happen were two baptisms that were prescribed in Exodus 30. In fact, if you didn't do them then you could be put to death according to Exodus 30. One baptism was a baptism of your hands. There would have been two cloths with one being used to wrap around the one who would baptize the feet. The other would be used to dry. So as they arrived the first thing would be to place your hands over the basin and the water would be poured over the hands to cleanse them. Then they would have sat down and their feet would have been baptized, cleansed. You can only imagine what a person's feet would look like in a first century town as many walked everywhere, they went in sandals. So they usually found a slave to do the

washing of the feet. In this particular meal they had the hand baptism done and we do know they didn't do the feet, but Jesus is going to make sure that Exodus 30 is followed. He will be the One to wash their feet.

We see how Peter responds to Jesus doing this in John 13:6:11 which says [6] *He (Jesus) came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"* [7] *Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."* [8] *Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with Me."* (If Jesus doesn't wash you, you will not be clean, ultimately pointing to being cleansed by His blood.) [9] *Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"* [10] *Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you."* [11] *For He knew who was to betray Him; that was why He said, "Not all of you are clean."*

So, what else would they do at the meal? After the baptism took place, there would be a prayer, then they would sing the Psalm (the Hallel) and then sit down. If it was a family partaking of this meal, the eldest son would say 'Father, what means this Passover?' At this point, everything has been prepared, the lamb has been slain, the blood has been put over the lentil and both door posts – Three strokes. The Lord would pass over the homes and those in it that were under the blood. Our saving work is by God. It's a Trinitarian Gospel – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What means this Passover? The entire family or group would be instructed from the book of Exodus that God graciously delivered us from the bondage that we were in and brought us out through a wilderness to the Promised Land. Now they were ready to eat.

They would have taken the bread. The bread served as nourishment and a utensil for they would take the bread and dip it, perhaps takes some herbs and even some lamb upon the bread and then partake of it. The meal would begin with the first cup of wine. It likely would have been new wine, meaning very little alcohol due to lack of fermentation taking place and it's the fruit of the vine. Furthermore, it would have been diluted with three cups of water for every one cup of wine. They would have drunk the cup, eaten the meal and then they would take a second cup. Then they would sing a hymn to go out but at this point Jesus stops. After the second cup has been taken, He takes the bread and says 'this is My body which is given for you' and then He broke the bread passing it to His Disciples as they partook of the bread.

It's obvious that this isn't the physical body of Jesus because His physical body is right there at this meal. What He is doing is anticipating the work of redemption and we partake of the benefits of what He does with His body and we spiritually feast upon Him and all that He has done to take our sins away. Then He takes the third cup and pours it out to His Disciples as He says 'this cup is the New Covenant in My blood which has been shed for the forgiveness of the sins of many, all of you drink it.' We are all saved by the work of Christ as His body bears our sins and we partake reminding us by faith and repentance we are in Christ and Christ is in us. It is His blood that wipes away all of our sins so that we are clothed with the righteousness of God.

This meal looked to Christ anticipating it and the meal He establishes for us is even more simple. The New Covenant bloodless meal is more simple and gloriously profound. I want to read for you what is known as the words of institution taken from I Corinthians 11 as the Apostle Paul gives us the insight into this meal.

I Corinthians 11:17–34 says [17] *But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse.* [18] *For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I*

*believe it in part, [19]for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. [20] When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. [21] For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. [22] What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.*

***[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, [24] and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." [25] In the same way also He took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." [26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.***

*[27] Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. [28] Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. [29] For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. [30] That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. [31] But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. [32] But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.*

*[33] So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another— [34] if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.*

This meal pointed to Jesus and the New Covenant meal is pointing you back to Jesus and what He did on the cross to save you from your sins. He didn't just overcome a tyrannical rule named Pharaoh but He defeated Satan, sin, death, hell and the grave. He didn't just bring us out the bondage of the slavery of men, He delivers us out of the bondage of our sin. You can be right with God and there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. You can be set free from the power of sin, not only declared innocent and justified because He takes away your sin and gives you His righteousness but this Table is telling you that He breaks the power of sin in regeneration for you can be born again. You still have sin living in you but you no longer live under the dominion of sin. Now you're set free to live for Him.

It's so easy for us to think that what we do is what saves us or allows God to save us. This Table keeps reminding you that you have been set free to do for Jesus but you don't do for salvation because He has done it. This Table keeps putting you back to your foundation. We have been delivered from sin's penalty and power. We are being delivered from its practice and one day there is another supper coming in which we will be delivered from the presence of sin and it's all because of Christ. That is what is taking place on this glorious night and that's where we are being pointed to so it is my great privilege as a minister of the Gospel to invite you to the New Covenant meal that has been mandated by our Savior so that we will know what it means to love one another as He has loved us.

We now know what it means to tell a lost world that is searching for any and every answer that are all empty and futile that there is One who doesn't love sin but He does love sinners. There is One in His enmity against sin who defeated it for you so that you as a sinner can come to Him and be set right with God and God comes right within you. That's the glory of what this supper recalibrates us to. The Old Covenant meal told us He delivered us, clean out the leaven, repent and then take your staff and follow Me. The New Covenant meal tells us to

remember the body and blood of Jesus – clean out the leaven, examine yourself and repent. You can be honest about sin and confess it because you’re not being saved by how well you do, for you are being saved by what He did. Now you can live the Gospel and preach the Gospel until He comes again. All of you who are in Christ those circumcised in Christ where He has cut out your old heart and given you a new one, I invite you to this meal today. He is your circumcision.

This is the Lord’s Table. You don’t have to be a member of this church or a member of a PCA church to partake. The Table is just one element of His church that all believers can partake of. If you are in Christ and Christ is in you and you reside with His people and in His people, then this is the covenant meal to refresh and renew you in your foundation in Christ and your life now for Christ. If you have children who don’t know Christ yet then use this meal to instruct them of a God who delivers them that they might come to Christ. This meal cannot convert anyone. This meal confirms and calls us, first back to our foundation – Christ and Him crucified – then forward to live for Him and then one day be with Him because the Christ who was crucified for our sins and buried, arose on the third day and thus we shall be with Him forever. Let’s pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You so much that we can come to the very simplicity of this Table – the body of our Savior and the blood of our Savior. Father, we can rejoice in serving You. Would You come Holy Spirit? We have done as they did in the Old Covenant for we come to the meal with instruction and then because we want to partake of Jesus by faith as faith comes by the hearing of Your Word, want to see what our Savior has done, hear from Him the assurance of salvation for all who are in Christ and then see and hear what He calls us to do for Him because the love of Christ compels us. I pray this in Jesus’ Name, Amen.